

VZCZCXRO1281
RR RUEHMA RUEHPA
DE RUEHNM #0619 1751413
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 231413Z JUN 08
FM AMEMBASSY NIAMEY
TO RUEHGI/AMEMBASSY BANGUI 0001
RUEHNJ/AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA 1538
RUEHYD/AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE 0038
RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 4381
INFO RUEHZK/ECOWAS COLLECTIVE
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 0129
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 0695
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 0192
RHMFISS/HQ USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE

UNCLAS NIAMEY 000619

SIPDIS

STATE FOR AF/W AND USAID
ACCRA AND DAKAR FOR USAID
PARIS AND LONDON FOR AF WATCHER

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [EAID](#) [CASC](#) [AEMR](#) [AMED](#) [PREL](#) [ASEC](#) [NG](#) [CD](#) [CM](#) [CT](#)

SUBJECT: UNITED NATIONS HUMANITARIAN AIR SERVICE (UNHAS)

¶1. Summary. The UNHAS launched an inaugural flight in Niger on June 12, 2008, with a short trip from Niamey to Agadez to Niamey. The UNHAS will facilitate travel to remote locations in country as well as offer limited service from Niger to other countries in west and central Africa. This most welcome service is being provided to U.N. system organizations and to certain employees and non-governmental organization partners (NGO) of U.N. member states. For Government of Niger (GON) partners, the new service will reduce travel time to in-country destinations from two or more days (by road) to two to three hours. The service will make it possible for GON partners to respond more quickly to emergency situations, including providing medical evacuations or other emergency assistance. The UNHAS will provide air service to Chad, Cameroon and the Central African Republic from Niamey and will connect to existing safe, reliable international flights between Dakar and Niamey. End summary.

¶2. The UNHAS has established a weekly schedule to provide domestic flight service within Niger and international flights from Niamey to Ndjamena, Bangui and Yaounde. The U.N. system organizations in Niger requested UNHAS in light of the "deteriorating security situation in the northern and eastern areas of Niger and the related hampering of the capacity of the humanitarian community to respond to emergency needs." (Note: Niger has no domestic air service, thus UNHAS will help fill that void. End note.)

¶3. The UNHAS is a World Food Program (WFP) charter for both passengers and cargo, "operating under the United Nations Common Aviation Safety Standards (AVSTADS) as agreed to by WFP and the Department of Peacekeeping under the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) guidelines." The UNHAS is a 32-seat charter (D328 Jet Aircraft) that will be based in Niamey. Standard operating procedures, guidelines and related application forms (for passengers and cargo) have been provided to offices of the U.N. system and missions of U.N. member states.

¶4. Each mission has been advised to identify two points of contact to vet its list of potential UNHAS users. U.S. Embassy Niamey's points of contact are the Ambassador and the Deputy Chief of Mission. In addition to U.S. Embassy employees (American and locally engaged staff) engaged in humanitarian work, a limited number of management staff from the following organizations engaged in humanitarian work have been invited to register for inclusion on the U.S. Embassy list: U.S. Peace Corps, Africare, Catholic Relief Service, CARE, Helen Keller International, Mercy Corps, Academy for Educational Development, Famine Early Warning Systems

Network, Africa Development Foundation, International Relief and Development, and Relief International.

15. The UNHAS flights to domestic locations (Agadez, Tahoua, Maradi, Zinder) are offered Mondays through Thursdays, on a first-come, first-serve basis at no cost to the traveler. (Note: Flights to Diffa are expected to be added once repairs to the landing tarmac are made. End note.) Each mission is limited to three seats per flight and is required to book seats at least 24 hours in advance. Missions are permitted to request additional seats on a wait-listed basis to fill any unbooked seats. Friday is a crew rest day. Saturdays and Sundays are reserved for international flights to Ndjamena, Bangui and Yaounde.

16. On a cost-reimbursable basis, missions may request special flights for hours outside the regularly scheduled flights.

ALLEN